

Oak Street
UNCLASSIFIED

Acknowledged

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE BULLETIN

VOL. XVI

SEPTEMBER, 1921

NO. 1

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS LIBRARY

Vision for Service

An Address at the Opening of the 122d
Year of Middlebury College
September 22, 1921

BY

President Paul D. Moody

MIDDLEBURY, VERMONT

Published Monthly by the College

PROFESSOR J. MORENO-LACALLE

Editor of College Publications

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE

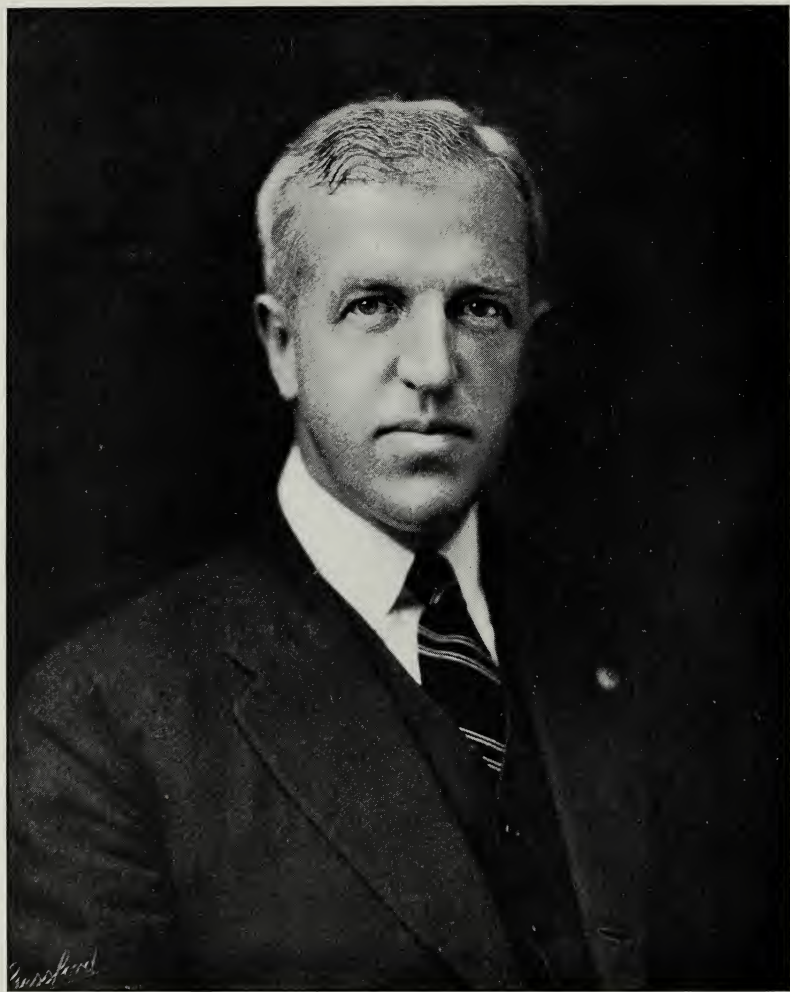
Chartered in 1800

Paul Dwight Moody, President

Middlebury College, established on the model of the older New England colleges, has undergone a rapid development within a decade. Grounds, buildings, and equipment, added to the original plant, have enabled the century old institution to keep pace with modern educational requirements and to accommodate a slowly but steadily increasing number of youth seeking higher education. The student body, now approximately 500, is about equally divided between what is known locally as "the Men's College" and "the Women's College."

The institution is located in an attractive country town, easily accessible by main lines of travel. The marble halls and extensive campus provide a beautiful and appropriate setting for academic life. The work of the College is carried on in twenty-one departments of study during the academic year and in the well known language schools of the Summer Session. Undergraduate courses, arranged in various programs of study, lead to the degrees of Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science, while in both College and Summer Session advanced courses lead to the degree of Master of Arts and Master of Science.

Men and women have separate campus and athletic fields, deans, who also act as vocational counselors, physical directors in charge of health and recreation, and separate musical, religious, and social organizations. The growth of the student body now makes necessary a sharp limitation of incoming students, both men and women, to the number that can be accommodated in their respective halls of residence.



PAUL DWIGHT MOODY
President of Middlebury College

Vision for Service

**An Address at the Opening of the 122d
Year of Middlebury College
September 22, 1921**

BY

President Paul D. Moody

**MIDDLEBURY
VERMONT
1921**



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2017 with funding from
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Alternates

VISION FOR SERVICE

It is a very happy tradition which decrees that the first day of the new college year, before actually beginning work in the classrooms, we should all pause for a moment to see our tasks face to face, and in company. This new year of study is momentous for some of us, and I use the first person in no editorial sense. For like some of you I, too, am a beginner, and while not in one sense a Freshman, in another I am. I presume that I shall always take a peculiar interest in two classes, the Class of 1922 and the Class of 1925. The former is not in as much need of guidance now as the latter. It is to them that I would say most this morning.

This new step means a greater degree of freedom than you have known before. And freedom like most other valuable things is capable of the very greatest abuse. Most of the abuse connected with it is based on a misconception concerning it. It is not lack of restraint. This is false freedom and is, after all, only another form of bondage. The locomotive which began to chafe at the restraint of the rails and at their rigid disregard of so many pleasant things along the way, and

broke from this restraint, would only find itself impotent beside the track, powerless to move either the cars attached to it or itself. And life is full of restraints like the restraint the rails offer a locomotive. Only by observing these restraints do we get anywhere in life at all. Many a youth looks forward to getting to college as a breaking away from certain restraints only to find that these have been absolutely essential. It is more than this.

Knowledge means freedom. It was not Aristotle or Socrates who declared that men should know the truth and the truth should set them free. It was the greatest of all Teachers and the wisest of all Guides. For true freedom means freedom from limitations. Knowledge is the key which opens door after door to us in life. We stand constantly before doors forever closed to us because we have not the key to open them. But there are doors to which we may have keys and college is concerned with slipping keys to future doors onto the key rings of our minds. Not always a pleasant process either for the owner of the key ring or the one who is concerned with getting the key onto the ring. This is the freedom for which you should seek, not the freedom from restraint, but the freedom from the limitations which ignorance imposes.

Now most new things are dangerous. And freedom has usually been dangerous to men and to institutions. Freedom was dangerous at first for the slaves emancipated by the Civil War. It was

dangerous for France liberated from the tyranny of the Bourbons. It was dangerous, and is still dangerous, for Russia released from the most complete autocracy the modern world has known. For individuals it is no less dangerous. The great classic instance of this is the story of the Prodigal Son. But every one of us could name other more modern, if not more typical, instances of this, men who interpret freedom as lack of restraint and who plunge wildly out on a path which means trouble and disaster, instead of viewing it aright.

Now it is to safeguard you against that very danger that I want to mention three things in which we must not make any mistake.

The first is the matter of regulations. When you are travelling along a road you will see a sign, "Danger! Go Slow," or "Dangerous Curve Ahead!" If you are driving a car you do not resent this sort of a sign for you realize that it was put there for your benefit, and that you are only being warned for your own safety. But it is another matter when you see a sign, "Keep Off the Grass." That always arouses in most of us a desire, perhaps up till then lacking, to walk on that same grass. The sign is there not for our benefit but for the sake of the grass and the man who owns it, and we are irritated by it.

You will meet regulations in college as you will throughout life. It is natural, I happen to know, for most of us to dislike regulations and to resent them. We may treat them as arbitrary things imposed to limit our pleasure, as "keep off the

grass'' signs, to show us our place and to make us feel small and under authority. Or we may see in them the wisdom of those who are more experienced than we are and realize that they are there because of the dangers on the road. There are no regulations connected with the College that you have to keep. You can always go. But there are regulations which you have to keep if you are going to remain in the College. But do not look upon them as arbitrary things imposed for your discomfort, but rather as arising out of a study of your own best interests.

I believe from all I know of Middlebury that this second warning is not so necessary. But, as a teacher myself for some years, I always believe in repeating it at the beginning of every year, to remind myself of it. The Faculty are not, as some of you will in evil moments be tempted to think, your sworn hereditary foes. But they are your best friends and they are more than that. They are your servants. If you were so endowed with this world's goods that you could, with private tutors, gain all the ends that now you will gain with your instructors, you would feel, and quite rightly, that your tutors were your servants, and the hours when you studied together would be arranged at your convenience. The principle is the same though you are meeting in classes and the arrangement of the classes is not for the greatest convenience of the professor but for the student. Of necessity the greatest good to the largest number dictates some deviations from the

method that could be pursued if each instructor were your own private tutor only. But the method is the same and we are your servants here. You do not exist for us but we for you. We do not pay you but you pay us. I do not want to stress this idea too much for commercialism does not enter into the true teacher's mind. The real teacher teaches more for the love of the subject than for the salary he gets. It is just because we are here to sell you what you want, to put it on the lowest plane for a moment, that we are going to see that you get it. The youth who wants to get the most out of Middlebury, the best out of college, will find nowhere a more loyal group of friends willing to aid him in this. And if by chance there is here any one who wants to get nothing out of his days in college; well, there are here those who will help him in this also, and even carry his bag to the station if need be.

But more important yet is the right idea concerning education itself. It should be looked upon as a responsibility and not as a mere privilege. You are concerned not alone with being better off by means of an education. You must also be better. There is no villain like the educated one. To teach a man without developing his character is to take a great chance in this world. We are heirs of the ages in the things we know and we owe much to those who are to come after us. We acquire an education, not because we want to make a living, but, to fall back on a common saying, because we want to make a life. The kind of papers

which measure success by dollars is often pointing out to us that many of the wealthiest men in the country never went to college. They fail to point out that these men usually send their sons if they can. And they do not always tell us what is also true, that these same men not infrequently give largely that other boys may have the chances they did not have. If you are not a better man, better citizen in the community, better member of society, because of your having your mind broadened, it may well be asked if it was worth while to educate you after all and if, in short, you are worth educating.

We are here to learn, not mere facts, not the sort of things we can find out in an encyclopaedia, but to learn to live, to be useful, to take our share. The first step toward this is to be able to see things as they are, not as they may seem but as they are, and to look life squarely in the face. The doctor, before he can set about curing the patient, must discover what is the matter, and this simple rule in medicine has unfortunately been overlooked in life too often, and we have set out to perform cures when we did not know well enough what was the trouble. So we try to see things as they are. There comes in the discipline of the classroom, which results in a mastery in the realm of observation.

But it is not an end in itself. We see things as they are, not merely to report on them but to better them. After winning laurels in other fields Mr. H. G. Wells has turned his rather remarkable

powers of observation and expression on the subject of education. The result was his book "Joan and Peter." It entitles Mr. Wells to be heard. So hear what he says, not in that book but in another. He is speaking of this very art of telling what we see, that we call realism, in literature. He says, "Personally I have no use at all for life as it is, except as raw material. It bores me to look at things unless there is also the idea of doing something with them. I should find a holiday doing nothing amid beautiful scenery, not a holiday but a torture. In the books I have written it is always about life being altered I write, or about people developing schemes for altering life, and I have never once presented life." Mr. Wells is right and the aim of college is not alone to see how things are but how also they might be. Not to study conditions as an end in themselves but to study conditions that we may have our share in righting them. No nation ever devoted so much care to the students as China. But this came to nothing, for her whole policy was to change nothing and her study did not look out to making the world better, but to keeping it the same.

We are to see things as they are, then, in order to see how they may be. We consider the present that we may make for a better future and we delve in the long dead past, not as an end in itself but that we may safeguard the present against the evils that have gone before. Knowledge is not an end in itself, but an equipment for service.

It is not only, then, to see things as they are that we come to college. It is to see things as they may be. And this we call vision. It is looking ahead. It was only this week that Professor Wright gave me a definition of a statesman, which I gladly share with you. A statesman, he said, was one who foresaw secondary results. The world needs men who see beyond their own nose and who can visualize for themselves what is going to be in the years when they are dead. The men who have amassed great fortunes have left some heritages we are not thankful for always, but the really large fortunes have always been amassed by men who looked years beyond their fellow men and who, while they were engaged upon their work, were probably called fools. It is the position where we can see ahead that we need, and this college will give us if we are willing.

In 1917 when the regiment which went from this state was being recruited, I was sent on recruiting duty into a part of the state some distance from here. I had an experience one morning which has always remained with me. Another officer and myself visited a family in which we understood there were two boys, one or both of whom should serve their country. It was one of those farms typical of Vermont—broad acres on a great hilltop, looking off in any direction for twenty, thirty, or forty miles. We found the two boys and we had no trouble persuading them of their duty. The only thing which had held them back was the question which of the two should

go. Because their farm was making a vital contribution to the country in foodstuffs, they had reason to believe that the farm should be operated. Both wanted to go, both felt that one should stay, and they had not been able to decide which should go and which should stay. Later one of them joined the regiment and left his brother to serve his country in a more prosaic way, but with equal patriotism.

We left that farm and plunged down into the valley where there was another farm, not so large, with three boys upon it. It was a farm completely shut in by hills, at the bottom of a valley, and you could not see in any direction for more than half or three-quarters of a mile. We found absolutely no interest on the part of these three strapping lads. It was not their war, they didn't care what the enemy did, and they were firmly resolved that they themselves would not fight. It was not for any lofty, conscientious scruples, but just sheer narrow-mindedness and indifference.

I have often wondered since, if the difference between the outlooks in these two farms was not the result of their geographical situation—the broad, far-seeing view being developed in the men who lived on the hilltop and looked out for many miles; the utterly narrow, selfish, squalid viewpoint belonging to those who lived in the valley and never found themselves stirred by the sight of great distances. This is what education does or ought to do. It takes men up from the narrow valley to the hilltop where long looks into

the past and contemplations of the future prepare them better for the duties of the day.

And finally, there is a verse which sums it all up better than any words of mine, a verse which some of you as you go on in life are going, like myself, to love more and more with each passing year, "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty, they shall behold the land that stretches afar." There is no such factor in education as God. The love of truth has been implanted in men by God and the great lovers of God in history have always been those men who dared most for truth. It has been when men made for themselves narrow, impossible conceptions of God that they became hostile to the truth. There have been times to the discredit of the Church when it has been hostile to learning. But it has always been at a time when her spiritual life was at its lowest. God-fearing men have been from the beginning the founders of colleges and the men who have made sacrifices for them. It was not the gay cavaliers of Charles who were responsible for the colleges of New England, but the believers in God who were willing to risk their lives for the sake of the truth as they saw it. If your days of study are what God wills they should be, then you will see the King in His beauty, God Himself will be more real to you. The telescope and the microscope will reveal His workings to you. And you will see the land which is afar off, the breadth of view will be yours which lifts you above the common, the petty, and makes life worth while.



3 0112 105847765

Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office, Middlebury,
Vermont, under act of Congress of July, 1894